(*d*) Yes. If sugarcane pays better than paddy, the area under sugarcane will increase. It is possible to increase the area under sugarcane. The Agricultural department has this point in view.

(*e*) Red Mauritius and Fiji B varieties introduced by the department are being cultivated.

(*f*) Yes. Co. 213 is under district trial in South Kanara. Some twenty varieties including Co. 351 are under trial at the Talipāramba Research station, to test their suitability to the West Coast conditions. Attempts have been made to introduce better varieties of sugarcane both in Coimbatore and Salem districts. Of the three varieties referred to, only Co. 213 has been introduced in Coimbatore and Salem districts. The present area under Co. 213 is about 600 acres in the two districts.

(*g*) More time is required to give a definite opinion about these varieties, in Malabar and South Kanara. In Coimbatore and Salem districts the introduction of Co. 213 has been successful.

Mr. M. S. Sreshta :—" May I ask what propaganda work has been done by the Agricultural Department to advocate the substitution of sugarcane for paddy and otherwise foster the growth of sugarcane? "

The Hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan :—" As far as I can answer that question now, Sir, I may say that we are merely advising the ryots to increase the cultivation of sugarcane."

Mr. T. S. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" May I know if the Government think that they will succeed in their attempt to have sugarcane substituted for paddy as a crop if they continue to take sugarcane as a dufassal crop? "

The Hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan :—" I am afraid I cannot answer that question."

Mr. T. S. Ramaswami Ayyar :—" Otherwise what do the Government mean by saying that they are making propaganda with regard to the increased cultivation of sugarcane, if they do not facilitate growing of sugarcane by reducing the tax on it? "

The Hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan :—" That is a matter for my Hon. Friend the Revenue Member."

Damage to coconut trees by the leaf pest.

*257 *Q.*—Mr. M. S. Sreshta : Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) what extent of damage to coconut trees has been caused by the leaf pest during the last three years in the South Kanara district;

(*b*) whether the Government called for information as to whether the ryots have realized the advantages of the methods adopted by the

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department to destroy the leaf pest, as promised by him in his reply to the last supplementary question in connexion with question No. 140 asked in the Legislative Council on 30th October 1933;

(c) if so, whether he will be pleased to place the information on the table of the House;

(d) whether there is any proposal to start again the use of parasites to kill the leaf pest; and

(e) whether any attempts have been made by the Agricultural Department to combat the attacks of the rhinoceros beetle?

A.—(a) The number of trees attacked during the last three years in South Kanara district is not known. In certain villages along the sea coast, the coconut leaf caterpillar assumed a pest form in some years, especially during the dry months of the year. In extreme cases all fronds except the central shoots are affected but the tree is not killed. During the rainy season, the pest subsides. Control measures were demonstrated in bad centres.

(b) & (c) Yes; a copy of the report of the Director of Agriculture is laid on the Table.[a]

(d) There is no such proposal. The special staff sanctioned for the breeding and liberation of parasites was withdrawn as a measure of retrenchment. The parasites are now found wherever the caterpillar pest is found, in small or large numbers, and they check the pest to a certain extent. It is, therefore, considered unnecessary to breed and liberate them.

(e) The Entomological Assistant stationed in the VII Circle and the Agricultural Demonstrators concerned give advice to the ryots regarding the remedial measures to be undertaken and whenever possible demonstrations of control methods are also given. The department is also educating the ryots by means of publications such as the Villagers' Calendar. The publication mentioned above contains a popular article on the beetles damaging the coconut trees in South India and their control.

Co-operation

Reasons for refusing the registration of the Depressed Classes Co-operators' Federation, Madras.

* 258 Q.—Rao Sahib V. I. MUNISWAMI PILLAI: Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the co-operative propaganda among depressed classes is now carried on by the Madras District Central Bank;

(b) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the inadequate propaganda carried on by the above bank;

[a] Printed as Appendix VIII on page 116 infra.